

THE memories came flooding back for nearly 3,000 Wycombe Wanderers fans on Monday night when a team of past players from over the last nine years fought out a superbly entertaining match against the present team for the Tony Horseman-John Maskell Testimonial.

The 5-4 scoreline tells the story of this match which was specially organised by the Bucks Free Press for Tony and John. The public responded to our call to pay tribute to two of the club's longest serving players. Tony has given 16 years' service and John 14 years.

All but one of the Past squad came to Loakes Park on Monday night. Only Keith Blunt, who was injured in training with his Plymouth Argyle team, was unable to make the trip while Steve Perrin, ruled out with a leg injury, still came to support the event.

There were plenty of stars there on the night and no one played better than Viv Busby, who has been out of action for three weeks at First Division Norwich City. Viv was determined not to miss the match despite the fact that he had to have treatment to his injured thigh before and after the match. Another player struggling with injury was Derek Gamblin. He pulled a hamstring the previous day but turned in a sterling performance at right back. Derek had only intended to play for the first 20 minutes but enjoyed himself so much

Wycombe Wanderers Present XI 5, Wycombe Wanderers Past XI 4 REPORT BY STUART EARP

that he stayed for the whole game!

The form of Peter Sudaby and John Delaney at the heart of the defence reminded fans of past days while Mick Mellows had a great game in midfield and combined well with left back Gary Hand. As Gary said afterwards: "I wouldn't mind playing in the same side as Mick every week."

Current Wanderers manager Ted Powell showed he had forgotten none of his skills in midfield while Larry Pritchard was his usual busy self. Upfront there was the magic of Ken Swain, now a regular with Chelsea, who delighted the crowd with some marvellous dribbling skills while Keith Searle produced some fine touches.

Before the match got underway special guest for the evening Dave Sexton, the Queens Park Rangers manager, made a special presentation to the two beneficiaries on behalf of the 'Free Press.' The teams lined up to form a tunnel and the reception given by the crowd to Tony and John was magnificent. They both received framed action photographs of themselves from the BFP, which incidentally were produced by Dennis Syrett, a former Wanderers goalkeeper, who runs the Art Shop in Castle Street, High Wycombe.

John Reardon, manager of the Present team for the night, fielded his strongest side in the first half which was rather quiet in the early stages. The fans must have

been wondering which side to support!

IAN SCORES

Obviously, the Present team had the greater team work and after Mick Hollifield had gone close, Ian Pearson opened their account in the 20th minute when Hollifield crossed low and hard from the bye-line. Ian slotted home at the far post.

There were great cheers two minutes later as Horseman ran through but was robbed by Hand's last ditch tackle. Everyone was hoping 'Bodger' would score on Monday but there was nothing given away by either side.

Mellows and John Priestley were just wide with powerful drives before the Past team hit back to level. Alan Phillips was under pressure from Busby and Searle and in trying to pass back to Maskell, could only loft the ball into his own net. A cross from Bob Davies caused an almighty scramble in the Past box in the 42nd minute which ended when Pearson stabbed the ball home to make it 2-1. Only a great save from John Pratt foiled Horseman just before half time, when the former Reading 'keeper dived at Bodger's feet.

Both sides made half time substitutions with Kevin O'Brien replacing Pratt in goal and Torry Reardon coming on for Pritchard. This half produced some brilliant football from both sides and was crowned by six more superb goals.

Busby weaved his way into the box but drove wide after 51 minutes and soon afterwards the Present team opened up a 3-1 lead. A lovely flick by Horseman found Pearson who brought the ball down and crashed in a shot on the turn to complete his hat-trick. Ian gave a masterly display of finishing.

CLASS GOAL

Within five minutes Busby and Swain showed their class with a fine move that made it 3-2,

Busby beating Keith Mead and crossing for Swain to chest the ball down and drive home past Maskell. This set the crowd alight and Busby went so close to equalising soon afterwards when he beat three defenders but blasted the ball just too high.

Mellows hit a post in the 73rd minute and Dave Alexander replaced Busby a minute later. This brought about a remarkable switch as Dave, in action only two days earlier at Loakes Park for Woking, crashed in two glorious goals inside two minutes to put the Past XI 4-3 ahead.

The first was a curving 25 yard shot that gave Peter Spittle, who had come on for Maskell, no chance whatsoever and then barely a minute later Alex played a great 1-2 with Searle and beat the goalkeeper again with a perfect finishing shot.

But the lead was short lived for the Past team. In the 82nd minute Alan Davies chipped over the defence and Dylan Evans met the ball on the half volley to send it like a rocket into the net. Kevin O'Brien hardly saw it. With four minutes left substitute Tony Price ran through the defence to make it 5-4 and before the close Searle, Alexander and Delaney all went close to making it a 5-5 draw.

The players and officials were entertained in the clubhouse after the game where Dave Sexton presented the three winners of the BFP competition with their prizes.

Final proceeds from the game will not be known for a few days but details will be announced in the 'Free Press' as soon as possible.

WYCOMBE PAST XI: J. Pratt (sub K. O'Brien 45 mins); D. Gamblin, P. Sudaby, J. Delaney, G. Hand, L. Pritchard (sub T. Reardon 45 mins); E. Powell, M. Mellows; V. Busby (sub D. Alexander 74 mins); K. Searle, K. Swain.

WYCOMBE PRESENT XI: J. Maskell (sub P. Spittle 61 mins); P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips (sub D. Bullock 45 mins); R. Davies; H. Kennedy (sub A. Davies 45 mins); J. Priestley (sub P. Cruise 45 mins); M. Hollifield; A. Horseman, D. Evans, I. Pearson (sub A. Price 66 mins).

Referee: D. Reeves (Denham). **Linesmen:** G. Taylor, W. Cleere (High Wycombe).

Half-time: Present 2, Past 1. **Goalscorers:** Past — Phillips 35, Swain 68, Alexander 2 (78, 80); Present — Pearson 3 (20, 42, 53), Evans 83, Price 86.